



# Town of Simsbury

933 HOBMEADOW STREET

P.O. BOX 495

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

TO: Mary A. Glassman, First Selectman  
Board of Selectmen

FROM: Karen E. Cortés, Deputy Registrar of Voters  
Margaret C. Diachenko, Registrar of Voters  
Carolyn D. Kelly, Town Clerk

DATE: October 15, 2010

RE: Special Election Date and Location of Polling Places

## Recommendation to the Board of Selectmen: Date of the Special Election

- **March 1, 2011:** We recommend this date for the special election. March 1 is a Tuesday within the timeframe and has the fewest conflicts with the school calendar.
- **March 4, 2011:** The last day we could hold the special election, which is 150 days after the petition was certified.
- **March 2 - 4, 2011:** Schools begin CAPT and Connecticut Mastery testing.
- **February 21 - 25, 2011:** Schools have a week of vacation; and February 21, Presidents' Day, is a holiday.
- **October 25, 2010:** If the Board of Selectmen chooses March 1, this is the last day to notify town committee chairs of the special election and of the period for their candidate endorsements.

## Recommendation to the Board of Selectmen: One Polling Place Location

- **Henry James Memorial School, 155 Firetown Road:** We recommend one polling place location for the special election. Using all four regular polling places for potential primaries on January 4, 2011 and a special election on March 1 will cause a hardship for the voters to access the polling places while maintaining the safety of students and the manageability of the poll location for the election workers and school staff. Voters are familiar with voting at referenda at this same location.
- Please see the information that David Holden sent on October 7, 2010.

"I was advised yesterday afternoon that the potential polling dates are March 1, 2, or 3, 2011. Please confirm if this is accurate. We have Connecticut Mastery Testing in all our schools except the high school beginning March 2 through March 11. So, if the above is accurate, please choose Tuesday March 1. Also, school is in session. Therefore, if polling for this special election can be scheduled for Henry James School only as with the annual referendum, this would be preferable given the security/safety issues at our other schools if polling occurs when school is in progress. Additionally, these dates are within our snow/ice season. If we have a storm, it would be a lot more manageable to get Henry James open and operational by 6:00am as opposed to 4 school locations.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

David

David P. Holden  
Business Manager  
Simsbury Public Schools"

Telephone (860) 658-3200  
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8:30 - 4:30 Tuesday through Friday



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## Office of the Registrar of Voters

March 7, 2011

To: Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee

From: Karen Cortés, Registrar of Voters, Town of Simsbury

Re: S.B. 384

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I submitted testimony in favor of S.B. 384, AN ACT CONCERNING THE NUMBER OF POLLING PLACES AND MODERATORS FOR PRIMARIES, on February 14, 2011. On March 1, the Town of Simsbury held a Special Election to fill a vacancy on its Board of Selectmen at a single polling location with a single unaffiliated moderator, and I would like to share the results.

Simsbury votes at four separate polling locations, with the exception of our budget referendum, which is held at our centrally located middle school. At the request of our public schools' business manager (see attached documentation), our legislative body voted to hold our special election to fill the vacancy on the board at a single location rather than four.

Through the process of combining the polling locations, we found several benefits:

1. **Vastly reduced staffing costs:** A single unaffiliated moderator supervised the activities of one team of poll workers.
2. **Simplified and less expensive absentee ballot processing:** The Town Clerk's office was able to reduce printing costs as absentee ballots did not need to be coded for four separate locations. Staff was subsequently able sort ballots in a single batch rather than by district. Two absentee ballot counters were hired for the combined location rather than eight counters that would have been hired for four locations.
3. **Faster, more accurate election results after the closing of the polls:** After closing, there was no need to compile data from multiple polling locations into a combined head moderators' report. Staff fatigue was greatly reduced, and final reports were complete within one hour of closing.

Detractors to combined polling locations speculated that voter turnout would be affected by confusion over where to vote. In our case, we fielded only four telephone calls from voters inquiring where to vote throughout the day, and turnout in our election for a single Board of Selectmen seat was 22%-- higher than most special elections for legislative seats held the week before.

I continue to advocate for S.B. 384, and hope that GAE will give a favorable report after its meeting on Tuesday

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